

United States Bankruptcy Court
For the District of Rhode Island

Minutes of December 14, 2000 Meeting of the Attorney Advisory Committee

The third meeting of the Bankruptcy Court's Attorney Advisory Committee was held at the Clerk's office on Thursday, December 14, 2000 at 3:30pm.

Attendance: The following members were in attendance:

Lisa Geremia
Tom Quinn
Charlie Pisaturo
John Rao
Dave Reilly

Court Personnel:
Susan Thurston
Michelle Torres

Absent: Patricia Antonelli, Mark Buckley, Bill Hague, Christopher Lefebvre, and Sheryl Serreze
*Peter Furness was unable to attend due to court being in session.

Meeting Discussion:

The meeting was called to order by Susan Thurston, Clerk of Court. The first order of business was a discussion of the recent changes to the Court's website. As promised previously, the Court replaced the local case query program with the national Web Pacer application, a national case query program designed and maintained by the Pacer Service Center. The committee was shown how to run queries and extract various reports from Web Pacer. The committee recommended that a list of courts that image documents be available on the website, as this will be helpful to attorneys who practice in other states.

The Committee then discussed future anticipated design changes to the Website. The Committee was advised that the main page of the website will be updated to display a less crowded menu choice. The Committee recommended various other new features, including having PDF writable forms and WordPerfect templates (instead of downloading the forms and typing the information on typewriters, attorneys and the public would have the ability to type on the forms from their computers); having a search engine for the Local Rules, use of an email list (listserv) with the main purpose of informing attorneys of new changes in the court and on the website, and a new section displaying the Court's opinions issued each month. Finally, a suggestion was made to change

Appendix II (Fee application summary sheet) from an appendix to a local form and have it placed under the ALBR Forms@category.

As a follow up to a matter discussed at the September meeting, Tom Quinn agreed to write-up a summary of his conversation with local auctioneers and their feedback concerning Local Rule 6005-1.

Next, the committee discussed courtroom technology and the types of new technology available for courtrooms. Although this fiscal year's financial outlook for the Court is not great, Susan reported that the Court intends to purchase computers for the counsel tables in the courtroom this year. Additionally, the counsel tables will have telephone jacks for Internet connection and LCD monitors. Future enhancements will include an evidence presentation system for the courtroom, and possibly a raised floor for wiring/cabling. The committee supported the suggested enhancements.

Increased participation in Electronic Bankruptcy Noticing (EBN) was the next item on the agenda. Court personnel reported the number of participants in this program had not grown in the past three months. The court has published articles in Lawyers Weekly, created notices in the Clerk's Office public area and had a pop-up window appear on the website for three months. The court's efforts did not seem to increase participation among the attorneys. The committee recommended a Food for Thought seminar on the subject.

The next item discussed was CM/ECF B short for ACase Management/Electronic Case Files@. The Court has begun the initial planning stages by creating various internal committees for implementing this next generation case management system. The Committee discussed the creation of two attorney subcommittees to address local rules and attorney training. The Committee recommended that the Court contact the Debtor/Creditor committee of the Bar Association to enlist attorneys interested in serving on either of these two subcommittees. At the next advisory meeting, if possible, the Court will conduct a demonstration of the CM/ECF program. Such a demonstration will give attorneys an opportunity to learn what is in store for the bankruptcy community in the future electronic filing world.

Finally, the committee discussed legal education for the Bankruptcy Bar. The Committee recommended that the Food for Thought seminars be held quarterly. The committee will discuss this topic further at the next meeting once we have obtained more information from the Bar Association on obtaining credits, facilities and other pertinent details.

The next attorney advisory committee meeting is scheduled **for MARCH 22, 2001 at 3:30** in the Clerk's office conference room.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.